

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2906

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IN, PK

SUBJ: SWARAN SINGH ON PAKISTAN BEFORE PARLIAMENT:

DEFINITELY NOT HAWKISH

REF: NEW DELHI 9731

1. IN CONTRAST TO HIS COLLEAGUE THE DEFENSE MINISTER EARLIER IN THE WEEK, FOREIGN MINISTER SWARAN SINGH TOOK AN ALMOST CONCILIATORY LINE IN RESPONDING TO PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS ABOUT INDO-PAKISTAN RELATIONS JULY 25. WHILE HE HEWED CLOSELY TO ESTABLISHED LINES, HE REFUSED TO BE DRAWN INTO STATEMENTS CRITICAL OF PAKISTAN EXCEPT WITH REGARD TO BHUTTO'S COMMENTS ABOUT AFGHANISTAN. THE FOREIGN MINISTER WILL PROBABLY HAVE MORE TO SAY IN THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS DEBATE, WHICH BEGINS JULY 26.

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2. SWARAN SINGH DECLINED TO PROVIDE DETAILS OF ALLEGED

PAKISTANI STATEMENTS INTERFERING IN INDIAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS, OR OF THE INDIAN REBUTTAL. HE SIMPLY OFFERED TO LET THE MP SEE A COPY OF HIS JUNE 15 LETTER TO AZIZ AHMED. HE REFUSED TO BE AROUSED ABOUT ALLEGED ANTI-INDIAN PROPAGANDA BY PAKISTAN IN THIRD COUNTRIES. REITERATING THE INDIAN VIEW THAT ITS NUCLEAR EXPLOSION WAS NO REASON FOR PAKISTAN TO BREAK OFF ITS TALKS WITH INDIA, SWARAN SINGH SAID PAKISTAN HAD MOVED AWAY FROM THE SIMLA PROCESS "WITHOUT RHYME OR REASON" AND MIGHT COME BACK TO IT IN A SIMILAR MANNER. THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE SIMLA AGREEMENT WAS PEACE, WHICH BENEFITTED BOTH SIDES. MEMBERS SHOULD LOOK AT THE AGREEMENT IN ITS TOTALITY RATHER THAN TRY TO ASSESS GAINS AND LOSSES ON INDIVIDUAL PARTS. INDIA'S JOB WAS TO BRING PAKISTAN BACK TO SIMLA, HE ARGUED. WITH REGARD TO KASHMIR, PAKISTAN OCCUPIED A PORTION OF THE STATE AND THEREFORE LOGICALLY HAD TO BE A PARTY TO ANY FINAL SETTLEMENT OF THE QUESTION, AS THE SIMLA AGREEMENT STATED.

3. ON BHUTTO'S COMMENTS ABOUT AFGHANISTAN, HOWEVER, SWARAN SINGH WAS SHARPER. HE CALLED BHUTTO'S THREAT "TO HOIST PAKISTAN'S FLAG IN THE EVENT OF WAR," IF REPORTED CORRECTLY, "FANTASTIC AND UNJUSTIFIED," AND EVIDENCE OF PAKISTAN'S "BELLICOSE AND AGGRESSIVE ATTITUDE." INDIAN SYMPATHY LAY ENTIRELY WITH AFGHANISTAN, HE SAID.
KREISBERG

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